

# Students offer Western quality help in many areas

by Jennifer Burton

Looking around the office, you may have noticed some new faces. Several are those of student interns. Western has a history of hiring students, although the way it hires students has changed.

There used to be several student hire programs with a variety of requirements. Now Western has one program called Student Educational Employment program. It is divided into two parts: the Student Temporary Component and the Student Career Experience Component. Both are effective in providing support for Western as well as education for the student.

Student temporary jobs are primarily summer positions that do not necessarily pertain to a student's field of study. However, placements can last as long as the employee is a student. This differs from the more focused career program. The career program provides students valuable work experience directly related to their academic field of study.

**Tiffany King**, an intern in DSW's Information Services, said the best part about

her internship is "on-the-job training." She continued, "I will be able to apply what I learned in the classroom to my job and vice-versa." The program allows students like King the potential to transfer into a permanent position after successfully completing education and work requirements.

A total of 40 student interns currently work at Western. Their tenure ranges from a month to six years. The program focuses on keeping students in school, while providing trained personnel for Western.

The Student Education Employment Program provides an environment for students to continue their education and get practical experience at the same time. While many of their peers are struggling through high school and college and taking a run-of-the-mill job, Western interns are gaining valuable knowledge of the business world.

Intern **Kristi Decaria**, a CRSP automation clerk in the Rates Analysis office said, "I've been living on my own, going to college and getting real work experience all at once for two years."

Student interns also provide much needed support to Western managers. We have students who do everything from basic clerical work, to the space reconfiguration for the Loveland Office to performing tasks on the cutting edge of industry such



Jennifer Burton



Tamara Sturgis



Jeff Tyacke



Danielle Trujillo



*Kristi Decaria*

---

***“Western’s interns are bright, dedicated, intelligent students eager to learn everything Western has to teach them.”***

---

***—Gale Meuret***

---

as processing power sales settlements.

**Tamara Sturgis** has worked in the Settlements Department in Power Billing at SN for several months. She is also working on her bachelor’s degree in Accounting and hopes to graduate soon.

“Because I am pursuing a degree, my position as an Accountant Student Trainee is an excellent opportunity. Western is providing me assistance with my tuition while allowing me to work a flexible schedule. It is fantastic and I am very grateful for this opportunity,” she said. “I hope to become a permanent member of the Western team.”

“These students are a continuing asset to Western and its goal to recruit, develop and retain a highly productive, customer-oriented and diverse workforce,” added **Gale Meuret**, CSO HR Operations team lead.

“Western’s interns are bright, dedicated, intelligent students eager to learn everything Western has to teach them.”

When asked if he could change anything about his job, **Jeff Tyacke**, a student intern working as an automation clerk at RM, said, “I would like to have more training in different software applications to do my job bigger, better and faster.”

Western continues to provide knowledge and experience for the next generation of government workers, teaching them what they need to know and providing them with a basis to

start their own legacy at Western. “I believe strongly in the student program as a win-win situation for all involved,” said **Matt Miller**, UGP’s information resource manager.

Western goes beyond teaching interns just the basics of work, teaching them also the ethics that go with it. **Carla Reich**, a computer clerk at UGP explains, “It [Western] has opened many doors for me. Not just experience, but also my ideals.”

**Danielle Trujillo** is 16 years old and the youngest intern at CSO—maybe even across Western. For the past three months, she has worked in Corporate Communications gaining new skills. One of her first tasks was to inventory more than 1,345 videos formerly stored at the video center. She also learned how to compile the Newsclips sent out from Corporate Communications daily.

Trujillo said, “It’s a little tricky. You have to know about issues in the power industry—so I’m always learning new things. All the people at CSO have been so helpful that it’s easy to learn. And I will be able to use the skills that I’m learning here in school or some place else in the future.”

So the next time you see a new face walking around the office, take a minute to introduce yourself. Find out what they are involved with. You never know the impression you might make!

**(Note: Jennifer Burton was a summer intern for Corporate Communications at CSO. She is pursuing a degree in Communications at the University of North Florida near Jacksonville.)** ✍